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PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN THE APPLICATION OF: Priestley et al
CASE NO.: PH-7087-A
SERIAL NO.: Unknown
FILING DATE: December 6, 2001
GROUP NUMBER: 1653
EXAMINER: D. LUKTON
FOR: NOVEL LACTAM INHIBITORS OF HEPATITIS C VIRUS NS3
PROTEASE

DATE: December 6, 2001

Assistant Commissioner for Patents

Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND FILING OF A NEW APPLICATION
CLAIMING THE BENEFIT UNDER 35 U.S.C. §120 AND §119(e)

Sir:

This Preliminary Amendment and the filing of a Continuation Application herewith is a bona fide attempt by Applicant to respond to the Office action dated June 8, 2001 in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286, filed July 25, 2000. A petition for a three month extension of time is being submitted concomitantly, via facsimile transmission, in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286, thus extending the due time for response in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286 until December 8, 2001, and extending the time for copendency until December 8, 2001. Thus, this filing of a Continuation Application and Preliminary Amendment is timely.

Claims 1-26 are pending.

Prior to examination on the merits please amend the above-identified application as follows without prejudice or waiver.

In the specification, before the first line, please insert:

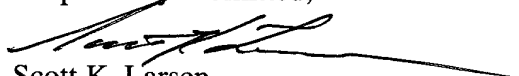
--This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 09/626,286, filed July 25, 2000, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/145,631, filed July 26, 1999.--

December 6, 2001

SUMMARY

The Claims of the present invention have been amended to place the application in form for allowance. Reconsideration and rapid allowance of pending Claims 1-26 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dec 6, 2001